

Kentucky Board of Education Report
Commissioner Gene Wilhoit
For
July 10, 2006 Council on Postsecondary Education Meeting

June 13-14, 2006 Kentucky Board of Education Highlights:

➤ ***704 KAR 3:303, PROGRAM OF STUDIES FINALIZED***

At its June 13-14, 2006, meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education made final changes to 704 KAR 3:303, Required Program of Studies. The additional changes that resulted from Board action in June included:

- ❑ Upon further review, the Program of Studies will be revised to refer to dates exclusively using the B.C. and A.D. designations. The time designations of B.C.E. and C.E. will not be a part of state law within the Program of Studies. Education of students about these concepts continues to be a matter of discretion at the local level.
- ❑ The social studies section of the Program of Studies will be revised as follows (Note: Underlined language was added and language with a strike-through was deleted.):
 - On page 193, under Skills and Concepts, ". . . explain basic democratic principles (e.g., life, liberty, pursuit of safety and happiness, acquiring and protecting property) found in Kentucky's Constitution."
 - On page 406, under Enduring Knowledge-Understandings, "The Constitution is a [~~flexible~~] document that can be changed from time to [~~change over~~] time through both formal and informal processes (e.g., amendments, court cases, executive actions) to meet the needs of its citizens."
 - Throughout the document, the term "American democracy" will be replaced with American "representative Democracy".
- ❑ The language regarding high school diplomas for students with disabilities, the third paragraph on page 559 of the Program of Studies, needs to be deleted as it is redundant of 704 KAR 3:305, Minimum high school graduation requirements.

The regulation will now proceed through the regulatory review process by the appropriate legislative committees.

For more information on this regulation, contact Michael Miller at 502-564-2106 or via email at Michael.Miller@education.ky.gov.

➤ ***BOARD MAKES AT-LARGE APPOINTMENT TO THE KHSAA BOARD OF CONTROL***

As recommended by the Management Committee, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) appointed Lea Wise Prewitt to fill an at-large position on the Kentucky High School Athletic Association (KHSAA) Board of Control. By law, the KBE appoints four at-large members to the KHSAA Board of Control. The appointments occur at the end of a member's term, which is for four years.

Ms. Prewitt's term will begin on July 1, 2006 and continue until June 30, 2010. She has been a long-time volunteer and supporter of many activities in schools, her church and the community. Her focus has been on teaching and working with children. Prewitt has extensive experience in the field of athletics and is a member of the Kentucky Athletic Hall of Fame.

For questions on this agenda item, contact Michael Dailey at 502-564-1479 or via email at Michael.Dailey@education.ky.gov.

➤ ***BOARD HEARS REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF 40 ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS***

With the rapid growth of alternative education programs, both the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) and the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) have realized the need for increased attention regarding the oversight of these programs. At the June meeting, the Board heard a report from the Center for School Safety on the monitoring of 40 alternative education programs, which were chosen at random. The KDE contracted with the Center for School Safety to provide the monitoring services.

Dr. Jon Akers, Executive Director of the Center for School Safety, and alternative education consultants from this organization summarized the main findings of their report at the June KBE meeting as follows:

- ❑ *Academic Performance: Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction* - The curriculum in most programs is not fully aligned with Kentucky's standards and/or local standards, resulting in a curriculum lacking rigor and challenge. Individual learning styles of the diverse student population are not consistently and intentionally addressed through differentiation of curriculum and instruction. Opportunity for assessment tasks that are both rigorous and authentic, based on Kentucky's performance level descriptions, is limited.
- ❑ *Learning Environment: Culture, Support and Professional Development/Evaluation* - In most programs, it was concluded that the educational staff members care about students and promote a positive (non-punitive) perception of the alternative education program. Most students interviewed said they get the necessary one-on-one attention to be successful in the classroom. Students emphasized that the smaller classroom atmosphere is a

positive feature about alternative education programs. However, in some programs where students are placed primarily for disciplinary reasons (alternative to suspension/alternative to expulsion), students expressed negativity. Not all programs are providing individual and group counseling services to address behavioral issues, even though many students are placed in the programs for disciplinary reasons. Professional development is ongoing, but the emphasis is not always on sustained and continuous growth, built around individual growth plans and a program improvement plan.

- ❑ *Efficiency; Leadership, Resources/Organization and Planning* - Most programs are organized to include a principal or lead teacher to provide the leadership. Often the lead teacher has full-time teaching responsibilities, as well. In most programs, leadership does not analyze CATS data at the program level to determine needs, goals and objectives for improvement. In a few programs, staff members participate in data analysis at the A1 schools. Textbooks used in the programs are often not the same quality and/or quantity as those provided at the A1 schools. Textbooks are often outdated and filled with graffiti. In many programs, computers need to be updated and/or replaced. Internet access is not available in all programs. Most programs do not have an on-site library/media center. Students are sometimes bused to the library/media center of another school or to the public library as an occasional field trip. When library books are available, they often do not include high interest choices. Although the Kentucky department of Education does not require alternative education programs to have an improvement plan, some of the forty programs had developed and implemented some type of improvement plan. However, not all of the improvement plans included an analysis of CATS data to determine priority needs. Most programs are located off-site in separate facilities, sometimes without full access to Software Technology Incorporated (STI); STI often includes only the attendance module.

After hearing the report, the Board asked that Commissioner Gene Wilhoit send a letter to all superintendents asking for the immediate correction of any violations of law occurring in alternative education programs. The Board also asked that Department staff meet with the staff from the Center for School Safety on recommendations for improving these programs and for the Department to pursue continued monitoring of A5 program quality. A report on these efforts is scheduled to come back to the KBE at its December meeting.

For more information on the Department's work with A5 programs, contact Nijel Clayton at 502-564-4772 or via email at Nijel.Clayton@education.ky.gov.

Next meeting: August 2-3, 2006 - Frankfort